

ST PETER AND ST MARY'S CHURCH

STOWMARKET, SUFFOLK

The Four Seasons – Four South Aisle Windows (each 1.9m x 4.0m) 2005-06

The theme for the windows is The Four Seasons, whereby God is celebrated as the creator of water, fire, earth and air and so celebrating the farming background of the donors, the Lang family. The initial idea for the commission was to place stained glass only in the central lights of the four windows, due to the limited budget. However, the differing architectural forms of the windows inspired me to create a sense of movement through the artwork. Thus the elements are embodied and represented by seasonal images in stained glass with biblical texts, set against a background of clear and tinted diamond-quarries, textured edging and occasional wavy lead lines.

Each window has a dominant colour appropriate to its season and element, and a palette of associated colours.

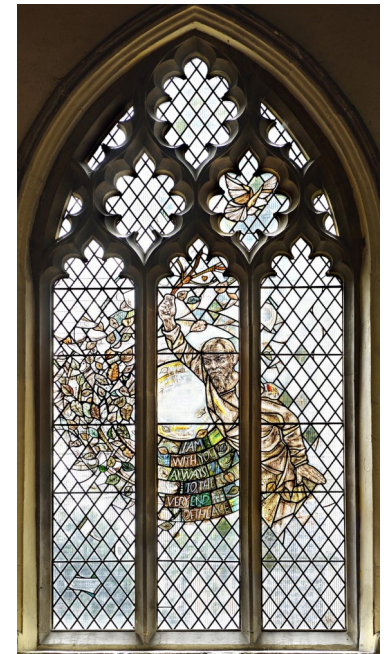
The sequence of the seasons (and the scenes within each window) is positioned to balance and complement the differing dimensions of the windows and the varied architectural designs of the tracery openings. The intention is that the similarity of composition and varied positioning of the images will form a rhythmical movement when viewed from the north nave aisle and yet still be meaningful when the windows are viewed independently.

Each window contains the unifying symbol of a dove representing the Holy Spirit. Each scene unwinds from a compass point, representing God the Creator, the beginning and the end, faith and love, and the two-way relationship between God and ourselves. Radiating from these points are allegorical figures representing the seasons, surrounded by images reflecting the elements and the seasons.

The biblical texts are taken from the New International Version of the Bible, presented in lettering designed by Charles Smith FRSA.



Photographs: Rob Scott



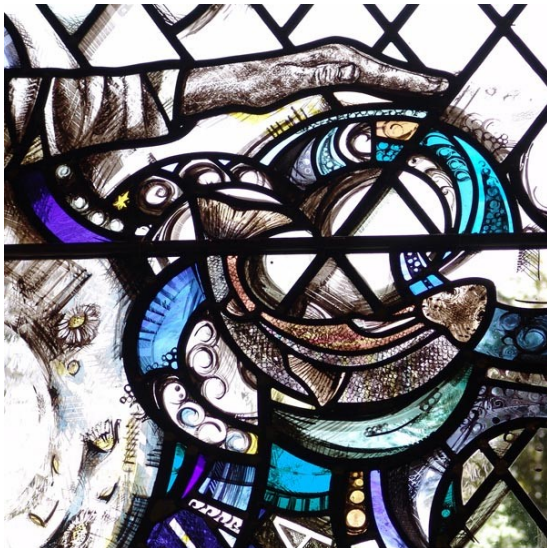
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Spring and Water – First Window from the East

Spring and Water are represented by a girl with a crown of flowers, emerging from the bottom left corner of the window amidst swirling waters, fish and spring flowers. The text 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you' is from Ezekiel 36:26. This Easter and Spring message is a challenge to each new generation, and invites personal, individual renewal through the resurrection.



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Summer and Fire – Second Window from the East

Summer and Fire are represented by a youth bearing a sheaf of corn on his arm. He emerges from the heavenly upper right hand side of the main lights surrounded by swirling flames of fire and sun. The text 'As sure as the sun rises he will appear' from Hosea 6:3 speaks of certainty and reassurance.



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Autumn and Earth – Third Window from the East

Autumn and Earth are represented by a woman carrying a basket of fruit and holding a bunch of grapes. She emerges from the earthly lower right hand side of the main lights amidst grape vines. The text 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it' from Psalm 24:1 speaks of harvests of all kinds.



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Winter and Air – Fourth Window from the East

Winter and Air are represented by an old man
with frost in his hair and beard, holding a leafless
branch and emerging from the centre of the main
lights in a dramatic gust of leaves and swirling
winds. The text 'I am with you always to the very
end of the age' is from Matthew 28:20 – a
resounding testament of reassurance and faith.

